

Claims

1. A method of resolving conflicts in the allocation of a shared resource between a first application to which the resource is currently allocated and a second application requesting access to the resource, including determining whether the second application is a predetermined favoured application.

2. A method according to claim 1, including, in the event that the second application is the predetermined favoured application, determining whether the resource has the authority to permit allocation to the second application.

3. A method according to claim 2, comprising, in the event that the resource has the authority to permit allocation, allocating the resource to the second application.

4. A method according to claim 2, comprising, in the event that the resource does not have the authority to permit allocation, requesting a decision as to how to allocate the resource.

5. A method according to claim 4, wherein the decision depends on input from a user of the first and second applications.

6. A method according to claim 4, wherein the decision depends on predetermined priorities assigned to the first and second applications.

7. A method according to claim 4, wherein the decision comprises denying allocation to the second application.

8. A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of determining whether the second application is a predetermined favoured application comprises comparing the identity of the second application with the identity of the favoured application.

9. A method according to claim 8, wherein the identity of the favoured application is stored at the resource.

10. A method according to claim 1, comprising, in the event that the second application requests use of the resource without requesting its allocation, recording the second application as a user irrespective of whether it is the favoured application.

11. A method of allocating a shared resource between a plurality of applications requesting access to the resource, comprising selecting an application that is to be favoured during resource allocation and communicating information identifying the favoured application to the resource.

12. A method according to claim 11, further comprising updating the resource with information relating to changes to the favoured application.

13. A method according to claim 11, including determining the favoured application as the application which is prioritized at a given time.

14. A method according to claim 13, wherein the prioritized application comprises the application with which the user is interacting at the given time.

15. A resource management system for allocating a shared resource between a plurality of applications requesting access to the resource, wherein, in determining the allocation of the resource between a first application to which the resource is currently allocated and a second application requesting access to the resource, the resource is configured to determine whether the second application is the favoured application.

16. A system according to claim 15, further comprising a focus controller for determining the application that is to be favoured during resource allocation.

17. A system according to claim 15 or 16, further comprising an application manager for resolving a conflict in a request for the resource between first and second applications.

5 18. A system according to claim 17, wherein the conflict arises when both the first and second applications require ownership of the resource.

10 19. A program for execution by a processor, to implement conflict resolution in the allocation of a shared resource between a first application to which the resource is currently allocated and a second application requesting access to the resource, including program code for determining whether the second application is a predetermined favoured application.

15 20. A program for execution by a processor for implementing the steps of claim 1.

21. A program for execution by a processor for implementing the steps of claim 19.